

<b>Institution: University of the West of England (UWE), Bristol</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 28 – Modern Languages and Linguistics</b>
<b>Title of case study:</b> Highlighting and preserving the Mosetén language and culture
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b> <p>Mosetén is an endangered language spoken by approximately 800 indigenous people in the foothills of the Bolivian Andes. Many Mosetén children only learn the majority language, Spanish.</p> <p>Research at UWE Bristol has resulted in the development of language materials for the Mosetenes, bilingual educators and other stakeholders. It has enabled bilingual education programmes, and inspired a new generation of Mosetén speakers. It has therefore had a direct influence in avoiding linguistic and cultural loss, and has helped the Mosetenes to preserve the intrinsic value of their language and culture, also raising the group's profile in Bolivia and beyond.</p>
<b>2. Underpinning research</b> <p>Since joining the University of the West of England (UWE), Bristol, in 2007 as a Senior Lecturer in Linguistics, Dr Jeanette Sakel, in collaboration with speakers of Mosetén, has conducted research leading to the impact presented in this study.</p> <p>Sakel worked for the first time on a combined grammar of Mosetén and Chimane – the two languages forming the small, so far unclassified, language family Mosetenan. Comparing the basic aspects of the grammar of both languages, Sakel set out to highlight the overall similarities and differences between the languages. These were summarised and presented in a Spanish-language grammar of the two languages [1]. The intended audiences for this grammar were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the speakers of the languages, and</li> <li>(b) the Bolivian and general Spanish-speaking public.</li> </ul> <p>The grammar was also produced to inform efforts to introduce bilingual education into Mosetén schools. For these reasons grammatical terminology was kept to a basic level with clear explanations.</p> <p>Related to this, Sakel conducted further work on the Mosetén language. Sakel looked at the way the argument systems of Mosetén and Chimane are built up [2], comparing these to other languages of the world. The insights from this research were also informed by the work on the Spanish-language grammar [1], as this is a part of the grammar where the two languages differ. Additionally, Sakel studied the verbal system of Mosetén in greater detail, looking at the ways in which verbs can be classified into different categories [3].</p>
<b>3. References to the research</b> <p>[1] Sakel, Jeanette (2009) '<a href="http://www.academia.edu/1478158/Moseten_y_Chimane">Mosetén y Chimane</a>' p. 333-375 in Mily Crevels &amp; Pieter Muysken (eds.) <i>Las lenguas de Bolivia</i> Plurales Editores; La Paz, Bolivia – <b>Available through UWE.</b>  <a href="http://www.academia.edu/1478158/Moseten_y_Chimane">http://www.academia.edu/1478158/Moseten_y_Chimane</a></p> <p>[2] Sakel, Jeanette (2011) 'Mosetén and Chimane argument coding: a layered system' in Françoise Rose &amp; Antoine Guillaume (eds.) 'Argument coding systems in Bolivian Lowland Languages', special issue of <i>International Journal of American Linguistics</i> 77(4): 537-557.  <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/662159">http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/662159</a></p> <p>[3] Sakel, Jeanette (2007) 'The verbness markers of Mosetén from a typological perspective'</p>

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

p.315-336 in Wälchli, Bernhard and Matti Miestamo *New challenges in Typology* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. ISBN 9783110195927

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/9783110198904>

<http://www.degruyter.com/view/books/9783110198904/9783110198904.5.315/9783110198904.5.315.xml>

**4. Details of the impact** (indicative maximum 750 words)

Sakel's research on Mosestén has benefitted the speakers, as well as the wider community, in two distinct ways:

- a) establishing bilingual education programmes, and;
- b) raising awareness and changing attitudes.

Both of these have contributed to the maintenance and long-term sustainability of the Mosestén language.

- a) Sakel's research made it possible to establish bilingual education programmes for the Mosestenes [6]. This was in part facilitated by Sakel's accessible Spanish-language grammar for the language, as well as Sakel's training of Mosestén speakers in the preparation of educational materials. For example, Sakel's main Mosestén collaborator [1], was involved in the preparation of a number of these educational materials [6], based on his status as 'bilingual educator' due to his work with Sakel [1], as well as his previous experience in developing a range of teaching materials for Mosestén in collaboration with Sakel [4]. Sakel arranged for these materials to be shared online [4], to be accessed by the speakers and educators (as well as found via a simple Google search) [5].
- b) Sakel's work has raised awareness of the Mosestén language and has contributed to a change in attitudes towards the language by its speakers as well as by outsiders. According to the evidence given by a German Aid worker based in Bolivia who wrote her PhD thesis about conflicts between Mosestenes and other actors in the region [2], the Spanish-language grammar has given the speakers a way of authenticating the fact that they speak a full language, not a mere dialect. It has put Mosestén on the Bolivian map alongside much larger and dominant indigenous languages, such as Aymara and Quechua. Sakel's work on Mosestén has led to a measurable change in mind-set and identity amongst the speakers of Mosestén. While the language can still be considered endangered today, many speakers have become aware of the value of Mosestén, both as a good among the people themselves, but also as a marker of ethnic identity that can be exploited in their newly developed projects of eco-tourism. This change in attitudes towards the Mosestén language was documented by the German Aid worker in her study of the conflicts and relations between peoples in the region, in which the status of the Mosestén language played a central role [2] (originally in Spanish). She concluded that "a new awareness of the importance of the native language" has arisen as a result of Sakel's work.

It is possible to measure the impact of Sakel's research in the following ways:

**Testimonials.**

- 1) by a prominent Mosestén speaker who became a locally recognised authority and bilingual educator through his work with Sakel [1].
- 2) by an Austrian neurologist, who worked with the Mosestenes during 2012-13 and who testifies to the use of Mosestén today, as well as the status of [1] as an authority in his language through his work with Sakel [2].
- 3) by a German geographer based in Bolivia, who wrote her PhD thesis (2010) on conflicts between Mosestenes and settlers in the Mosestén region and who is now working as an aid worker in lowland Bolivia. She testifies to Sakel's influence in changing attitudes towards the Mosestén language, which she both encountered through her own research on the group, as well as by living in the community and gaining an in-depth knowledge of the people and their language. She

## Impact case study (REF3b)

comments that “the current Bolivian Government tries to introduce bilingual education in the regional native languages... and this would be impossible without the professional materials provided by Dr Sakel” [3].

### Statistics from Sakel’s Academia profile

These show the access to materials made available online by Sakel and include educational materials provided by Huasna and Sakel [4], as well as a pre-publication version of Sakel’s Spanish-language grammar of Mositén and Chimane [5]. Statistics show that the latter is accessed approximately twice a day from Bolivia, usually referred by Google [5]. The most common search keywords – all in Spanish - appear to be from the general public, typically including questions about customs of the Mositenes or the words for specific cultural goods.

### The presence of Mositén in public discourses inside Bolivia

Sakel’s work has facilitated and inspired not only Bolivian academics, but especially members of the Bolivian public to be interested in the Mositén language. This has involved the development of language materials for bilingual education and cites Sakel’s work in a blog about language maintenance in the Amazon [6].

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Sources are given as hyperlinks. Testimonials and further documents are available from the University of the West of England upon request.

[1] Testimonial by a prominent Mositén speaker who became a locally recognised authority and bilingual educator which confirms the influence of UWE research on bilingual education programmes and the new status of Mositén. This testimonial is given in Spanish. [1 on the REF portal]

[2] Testimonial by a geographer and now the German Aid worker based in Bolivia, This testimonial is given in Spanish. [2]

[3] Testimonial by an Austrian neurologist working with the indigenous group in 2012-13, testifying to the current status of the language. [3]

[4] Booklets in Mositén published online in 2011, previously distributed to all Mositén families as photocopied booklets: [Ojtere](#) ‘The rooster’ and [Poromasi Pheyak’dye’in](#) ‘Old stories’ – **Available through UWE.**

[5] Statistics from Sakel’s Academia profile (<http://westengland.academia.edu/JeanetteSakel>), including statistics showing over 450 separate views of the Spanish-language grammar *Mositén y Chimane* (2009). It is possible to see search terms, and a collation of these is available on request – **Available through UWE.**

[6] Mention of Sakel’s work on Mositén in a blog about the [changes in language-maintenance](#) – **Available through UWE.**